



COOK & CHEF  
· I N S T I T U T E ·

**Chef's Guide**  
to Sustainable Dining





## DESIGNING A SUSTAINABLE MENU

1. Reduce food waste: Food waste is one of the key issues and reducing food waste comes with tones of benefits.
2. Keep it seasonal. This is one of the most powerful steps you can take toward sustainability.
3. Offer more vegan and vegetarian options.
4. Use less popular fish choices or those previously seen as 'marine waste'.
5. Be adaptable: be willing to change your menu depending on what is available.
6. Design your menu to limit the number of ingredients and repurpose those usually thrown away.

## SERVING UP

7. Use smaller plates: Many restaurants serve way too large portions of food. Reducing the size is not only more sustainable but can help prevent overconsumption.
8. Customize portion size: Offer multiple sizes such as regular and lite. Portions can also be customized to meet the needs of individual clients or groups.
9. Go trayless: People put too much stuff on their trays that they end up throwing away.

## SOURCING YOUR FOOD

10. Buy locally: Support local farms and producers.
11. Buy from farms that practice sustainability.
12. Buy sustainable seafood: The basic rule to follow is, if they won't tell you how or where they caught it, don't buy it.
13. Grow your own: Look around you for space you can use to grow things that you use a lot, such as herbs and salad greens.

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## DEALING WITH WASTE

14. Buy what you need: Buy optimized quantities for your daily or weekly needs rather than oversupply and then throw food away.
15. Strictly manage stock and expiration dates: Monitor expiration dates, food color, and smell and move menu items up to prevent as much food waste as possible. Look into point of sale systems that have an automated inventory management application.
16. Create a waste log: Write down what you're throwing away and why. After a few weeks you'll hopefully be able to discover some trends and can start making program adjustments to reduce waste.
17. Utilize every part of your ingredients: For example, don't only use the best cuts from pork, veal, use it all.
18. Set up an in-house composter or worm farm for all the left-overs.
19. Food donation: There are many organizations out there using what you might call waste to feed the homeless or food poor.





## CHECK FOR WATER WASTE

20. Monitor for leaky pipes and faucets.
21. Only serve water to guests who ask for it.
22. Make sure your dish washers are full.
23. Thawing food in the refrigerator, not under a faucet.

## EQUIPPING YOUR PREMISES

24. Buy sustainable equipment: Energy efficient equipment may initially cost more but having it can pay off more in the long run. Look for things like low flush toilets, energy star appliances, and energy star refrigeration. Make sure all your equipment like POS systems, lights, and ovens are turned off at close of business every day.
25. Use green cleaning products.
26. Buy apparel and napkins from fair trade materials.
27. Use little or no paper.
28. Buy furniture made from reclaimed wood.
29. For your interior design, work with local, environmentally conscious artists.
30. Use eco-friendly solar, geothermal for electric use where possible.

## DITCH PLASTIC

31. Use washable serving equipment, glassware or reusable dishware.
32. Don't sell water in plastic bottles.
33. Get rid of plastic straws.

## SPREAD THE MESSAGE

34. As a community service, restaurants, cafes, bakers, bars are all part of the social conversation. Once you're happy with your sustainability, promote it. Let everyone know and you'll inspire others along the same route.
35. Think about "green" discounts. Perhaps reward guests who bike or walk to get their gastronomic fix.